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South Carolina House of Representatives

# Legislative Update & Research Reports

Robert J. Sheheen, Speaker of the House

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## CONTENTS

## STATE DOCUMENTS

Prefiled House Bills.....	2
Summary of the 1988 Beach Protection Act.....	6
Research Report: High School Dropouts.....	10

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Prefiled Bills

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Here are summaries of the bills prefiled by House members through October 25. Not all House bills prefiled from October 4-25 are listed here. The bill summaries are arranged according to the House standing committee to which they were referred.

**Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee**

Permits for Captive Wildlife (H.4170, Rep. J. Harris). This bill would prohibit the capture and keeping of any wildlife species for exhibition, display or private use without a permit. As defined by this bill, wildlife would mean a wild mammal or bird not native to South Carolina which is inherently dangerous. The permits would be issued by the executive director of the state Wildlife and Marine Resources Department for scientific and educational purposes to accredited schools, colleges, universities, public museums and government agencies. Under these permits, the Wildlife department would inspect the premises where the animal is kept every six months. The permits would not have to be obtained by zoos or transient circuses.

Violations could result in a misdemeanor conviction carrying a fine between \$50 and \$1,000 or imprisonment for not more than 60 days.

**Education and Public Works Committee**

Social Security Numbers and Driver's Licenses (H.4164, Rep. Rudnick). Under this bill, the State Highway Department would be required to use an individual's Social Security number as his driver's license number.

School Days Requirement and Hurricane Hugo (H.4190, Rep. Foster). Under this joint resolution, school children out of school due to Hurricane Hugo could be exempted up to five days of the required 180 school day requirement. In addition, the State Department of Education could exempt additional days for school systems severely damaged and disrupted by the storm.

## Judiciary Committee

Judicial Floor Nominations (H.4165, Rep. M.O. Alexander). This bill would prohibit any candidate for election to a judgeship to be nominated from the floor unless the candidate had been reviewed by the Judicial Screening Committee.

Judicial Candidates (H.4166, Rep. M.O. Alexander). This bill would delay a judicial election in the event that the Judicial Screening Committee finds a candidate unqualified or the incumbent withdraws prior to the election. Additional candidates would be given ten days to file for election and to be screened by the Judicial Screening Committee.

Campaigning for Judgeships (H.4167, Rep. M.O. Alexander). Under this bill, any candidate for a judgeship, including incumbents, would be prohibited from campaigning for election among members of the General Assembly until the Judicial Screening Committee screens all the candidates for the office. The Screening Committee can consider a violation of this provision when screening the candidate.

Screening Committee Changes (H.4168, Rep. M.O. Alexander). This bill would change the make up of the Judicial Screening Committee by adding three practicing members of the South Carolina Bar Association, appointed by the governor. In addition, the number of legislators would be reduced from eight to six: Three members of the House and three senators. Specified by the bill, one House member and one senator may not be attorneys.

Price Gouging (H.4198, Rep. McGinnis). In the event of a natural disaster, this bill would allow the governor, with the consent of the State Budget and Control Board, to set the maximum prices for critically needed items in the disaster areas. The prices would be set by executive order 24 hours prior to the disaster, if possible to predict, and could not last more than 15 days.

Anyone found guilty of the misdemeanor of price gouging could be fined not less than \$1,000 and imprisoned for not less than one year or both.

Irrevocable Resignation (H.4200, Rep. Sheheen). This bill would repeal the irrevocable resignation law for elected officials passed by the General Assembly in 1988, and replace it with the provisions of this legislation.

Under this legislation, an elected official would be able to submit an irrevocable resignation from office effective on a specific date. This action would require that an election be held as if the office vacancy has occurred on the date the irrevocable resignation is submitted. However, the bill stipulates that the winner of the election may not take the office until the vacancy actually occurs.

### **Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee**

Driving Record and Auto Insurance Rates (H.4192, Rep. Davenport). Under this bill, an insurance company may inspect a driver's record for the preceding two years, instead of three years, when determining whether the driver meets certain parts of the objective standards test. This reduction in time period does not apply to all the objective standard criteria.

The two year inspection period would apply to convictions for driving violations on three or more separate occasions; two or more "chargeable" accidents, and one "chargeable" accident and two convictions for driving accidents.

Not changed under this bill is the three year inspection of a driver's record for DUI convictions, conviction of felony use of a motor vehicle, leaving the scene of an accident, auto theft, driving under suspension or revocation, reckless driving, criminal negligence, fraudulent claims and other fraudulent acts.

Raising Auto Insurance Premiums (H.4194, Rep. Davenport). Under this bill, an automobile insurance company could not increase the premium of a person who is convicted of a traffic violation which does not expose a person, other than himself, to bodily injury or the threat of property damage.

### **Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs**

Law Enforcement Training (H.4180, Rep. Keegan). This bill would allow the substitution of successful equivalent training by the Armed Services or federal law enforcement agencies in the place of basic training by the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy for law officers hired in the state. Those who qualify by way of this alternate training may serve without a S.C. Law Enforcement Training Council certification under this legislation.

**Ways and Means Committee**

Homestead Exemption Increase (H.4172, Rep. Smith). This legislation would increase the Homestead Exemption from the first \$20,000 of fair market value to the first \$50,000 of fair market value. This bill would take effect in the 1990 tax year.

Teacher Requirements for Pay Raises (H.4173, Rep. McTeer). Under this bill, all teacher with 25 years or more of teaching experience -- not just those with 25 years of teaching as of the 1984 effective date of the EIA -- are eligible for pay raises without meeting the minimum knowledge proficiency criteria spelled out in the law.

Federal Tax Deduction (H.4177, Rep. Kirsh). This legislation would eliminate the current \$3,000 state income tax deduction from all retirement income, including federal, military, state and law enforcement retirees.

Summary of Beachfront Management Law

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Hurricane Hugo and the destruction it left along the South Carolina coast is one of the first tests of many of the Beach Protection Act's provisions. Here is a summary of that act reprinted from the 1988 Post Session Report.

Act 634  
Beach Protection Act

This new law states that a 40-year retreat policy must be implemented along the South Carolina coast to restore the beach/dune system to its natural dynamic equilibrium. Critical provisions in the act deal with what may and may not be built or rebuilt along the beach. Here is an outline of those provisions, starting first with the establishment of the important baseline and setback line.

Establishment of the baseline and setback line:

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The baseline will be located at the crest of the ideal primary oceanfront dune or where the dune would have been had the shoreline not been altered. This line would be determined by professional geologists.

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The setback line will be located landward of the baseline at a distance of 40 times the annual erosion rate. All setback lines must be established no less than 20 feet landward of the baseline, even where the shoreline is stable.

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An interim baseline and setback line must be established by July 1, 1988. Both lines must be reestablished by July 2, 1990. After July 1, 1990, both lines will be reset within 10 years, with revisions made every 5 to 10 years after that.

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Nothing in the act allows for the seaward movement of the setback line after July 1, 1990. However, the act notes that renourishment may slow down or prevent the landward movement of the setback line.

Damaged existing habitable structures, seaward of the setback line, may be repaired if:

- The total square footage of the repaired structure does not exceed the total square footage of the original structure.
- The repaired structure's linear footage facing the coast does not exceed the linear footage facing the coast of the original structure.
- The repaired structure is not any farther seaward than the original structure.
- All repairs are permitted by local zoning and building authorities.

Existing habitable structure, seaward of the setback line, destroyed beyond repair, may be replaced if:

- The total square footage of the repaired structure does not exceed the total square footage of the original structure.
- The repaired structure's linear footage facing the coast does not exceed the linear footage facing the coast of the original structure.
- The repaired structure cannot be any farther seaward than the original structure.
- All repairs are permitted by local zoning and building authorities.
- Where possible the replaced structure must be moved behind the setback line. If this is not possible, then it must be moved as far landward as possible.
- Any erosion control device protecting the replaced structure must conform to the specifications of this section of the law. (See below.)  
The owner must renourish the beach in front of the property with at least one and a half times the yearly volume of sand lost due to erosion. This would not apply if the property is undergoing federal, state or local renourishment.

In addition, if a structure is rebuilt:

- No rebuilding may be done in the 20 foot area landward of the baseline. This is the so-called "dead zone."
- No recreational amenity can be replaced seaward of the setback line.
- Rebuilding is allowed only if the original structure is destroyed beyond repair. If the owner decides not to repair the structure, he must remove it.
- Nothing in this section is intended to prevent normal maintenance.

- If a landowner is affected by the "dead zone" rebuilding prohibition, he may petition the circuit court to determine whether the "dead zone" prohibition prevents practical use of his land and is an unreasonable exercise of the police powers of the state. The burden of proof is on the state to prove that the prohibition is not an unreasonable exercise of police powers. If the state is unable to prove that there was not a "taking," then the state may either issue the construction permit or provide reasonable compensation.

If an erosion control device, seaward of the setback line, is damaged less than 50 percent, it maybe repaired if:

- Permitted by the local zoning and building authority.

If an erosion control device, seaward of the setback line, is damaged more than 50 percent, it may be replaced if:

- The device protects a habitable structure.
- The replacement device is not vertical.
- The replacement device is located as far landward as possible.
- If the erosion control device protects undeveloped land, it may be replaced at its original location in order to provide a continuous structure as existed before.
- If the erosion control device is replaced, the owner will be required to renourish the beach in front of the property on a yearly basis with an amount and type of sand approved by the Coastal Council. This amount may not be less than one and a half times the yearly volume of sand lost due to erosion. This would not apply if the property is undergoing federal, state or local renourishment.
- If the owner fails to comply with these requirements, the erosion control device must be removed immediately.

The law further states:

- Effective 30 years after enactment of the law, all vertical seawalls must be replaced with a device that conforms with requirements set by the Coastal Council unless a registered engineer certifies that removal of the existing vertical device would result in the immediate collapse or damage to an habitable structure.
- If the owner decides not to repair or rebuild the device, he must remove it.
- Any device protecting an existing highway is exempt from these requirements.



- A provision in the act relating to Folly Beach would allow the local government there to exempt itself from the vertical seawall requirements; however, the town would not be eligible for any state beach renourishment funds if it chose to exempt itself. The town must notify the state of its decision by July 1, 1988.

New habitable structure, built along the coast, require that:

- No habitable structure bigger than 5,000 may be built seaward of the setback line. The owner must certify to the Coastal Council that the new habitable structure will be no larger than 5,000 square feet, inclusive of porches, decks, patios and garages, and will be located as far landward on the lot as practicable.
- No new construction of any kind is allowed seaward of the baseline.
- No new structure of any kind may be built in the area from the baseline to 20 feet landward. This is the so-called "dead zone."
- No new recreational amenities may be constructed seaward of the setback line.
- No new erosion control device may be built seaward of the setback line except those protecting existing highways.
- No erosion control device may be incorporated as an integral part of any new habitable structure.

Property already legally commenced seaward of the setback line may continue if evidenced by:

- All building permits, planned development, planned unit development or master plan approved by a local government by March 1, 1988, or
- If utilities and infrastructure has been installed by March 1, 1988.

Signed into law June 7, 1988.

## High School Dropouts

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With the passage of "Target 2000" last session, the General Assembly made dropout prevention a key provision of education reform. This research report examines the high school dropout problem in South Carolina and what remedies are underway here and in other parts of the country.

### Introduction

High school dropouts are both an educational and economic problem. As South Carolina's work force moves away from the days of unskilled labor, high school dropouts jeopardize their own economic well being as well as the state's.

The school dropout phenomena is not a problem in isolation. It is a multi-faceted and complex event. Even discovering the real percentage of young people dropping out is no simple task. There is considerable conflict among educators about the percentage of students who are dropping out. Traditionally, however, dropout rates have been reported as the number of students leaving school within a given academic year for grades 9 through 12. Most dropping out occurs between ages 16-18 and between the 10th and 12th grades, with the problem occurring equally among black and white students.

According to the National Dropout Center at Clemson University, 28.5 percent of the nation's public high school students dropped out of school during 1986. This number may be even higher for South Carolina. Richland County District 1's "Cities in School" program estimates that in 1986 as many as 35.5 percent of South Carolina's high school students dropped out of school. The State Department of Education's Division of Public Accountability, however, estimated South Carolina's dropout rate to be between 25 to 33.3 percent.

In the annual report "What the Penny is Buying for South Carolina," the Division of Public Accountability also calculated the rate which students leave high school before graduation. According to the report, "approximately 27 percent of the students who were enrolled in the ninth grade in 1982-83 did not graduate with the Class of 1986."

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This report was researched and written by USC Legislative Intern Shirley Gossett.

According to the 1987 Dropout Prevention Task force Report, issued by the S.C. Department of Education, South Carolina, along with other southern states, lead the nation in the percentage of students dropping out.

It cites a 1985 study by the Education Commission of the States which tracked by state the number of first graders not accounted for 12 years later at graduation. The lowest percentage recorded was North Dakota at 5 percent; the highest, Louisiana at 43 percent. South Carolina ranked 45th nationally with a 34 percent dropout rate.

**State by State Ranking  
1985 Education Commission of the State Dropout Study**

North Dakota	5%	Oklahoma	20%	Nevada	25%
Minnesota	9%	Colorado	21%	Michigan	26%
Delaware	11%	Indiana	22%	Oregon	27%
Iowa	12%	Connecticut	22%	New Mexico	29%
South Dakota	15%	Idaho	22%	Texas	31%
Vermont	15%	Alaska	22%	North Carolina	31%
Utah	15%	Massachusetts	23%	Arizona	32%
Nebraska	16%	West Virginia	23%	Kentucky	32%
Wisconsin	16%	Illinois	23%	Alabama	33%
Montana	17%	Maine	23%	New York	33%
New Jersey	17%	New Hampshire	23%	SOUTH CAROLINA	34%
Kansas	17%	Arkansas	24%	Georgia	34%
Hawaii	18%	Missouri	24%	Florida	35%
Ohio	18%	Virginia	24%	Tennessee	35%
Wyoming	18%	Washington	25%	Mississippi	35%
Maryland	19%	Rhode Island	25%	Louisiana	43%
Pennsylvania	20%	California	25%		

**The Impact of Dropouts**

It is now widely recognized that dropouts have an adverse social and economic impact both at the state and national level. A special report published in a Fall 1988 edition of Business Week stated that America has "blind-sided" its own future well-being due to its illiterate work force. The magazine attributed Japan's rapid increase in export trade to its better educated work force. In 1988, Japan's functional literacy rate was better than 95 percent. In America, Business Week reported, the functional literacy rate was 80 percent.

The report further details projections done by the U.S. Labor Department. According to department estimates, future labor surpluses (those looking for jobs) will occur only at the lower levels of the market place. As the need for reading and writing skills increases, jobs will go begging for want of those with the literacy skills to do them. The department projects that "50 million workers may have to be trained or retrained in the next 12 years -- 21 million new entrants and 30 million current workers."

The impact of dropping out is grim both for the individual and society as a whole. The National Dropout Prevention Center estimates that "(a) dropout will earn \$55 less every week than a high school graduate." The annual cost to the American public to assist dropouts amounts to \$75 billion a year in welfare and unemployment costs, lost revenue, crime and crime prevention. They cost American business \$25 billion a year in training costs and low productivity. A 1988 report "At Risk in South Carolina: The High School Dropout" states that the economic costs to the nation is nearly "\$229 billion in lost income and \$69 billion in lost tax revenues for only one year's dropouts."

Because their employment is less likely to include health benefits, dropouts have an adverse impact on the health care system. Further, 69 percent of of the recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children did not graduate from high school, neither did 71.1% of the inmates in the South Carolina Department of Corrections. Most disturbing to many experts is the propensity for dropping out to run in families -- under-educated citizens having under-educated children.

Additionally, as the median age of American workers rises, the implication of dropouts on a retiring work force is troubling. Declining birth rates and a rising median age will necessitate 2.2 workers supporting each retiree by the year 2030. It is projected that one of these workers will be either under-educated or on welfare. Comparing these future figures with 1950 data of 17 workers per retiree puts the dropout impact in perspective.

#### Reasons for Dropping Out

There are a multitude of reasons that teenagers do not complete high school, experts say. Some of the most persuasive appear to be school failures and frustrations, pregnancy, expulsion, truancy, suspension, alcohol and drug abuse, and low socio-economic levels.

### Poverty

One recurring factor common to many dropout studies is poverty. Currently, 32.5 million people in the United States live in poverty -- of these 40 percent are children. In South Carolina, 13 percent of the families live below the federal poverty level.

When questioned, some dropouts give the need to work as their reason for leaving school. However, in many cases, these teenagers leave school to take entry level jobs that have few opportunities for advancement, thereby perpetuating their low socio-economic status.

### Retained in Grade

Having been retained in grade is one of the best predictors of dropping out of school. During the past two years, in excess of 40,000 South Carolina students were retained in grades one through eight. According to the state Department of Education this number represents 10 percent of all students in those grades. A common characteristic concerning students who dropout is that "all dropouts tend to be over-age for grade."

### Teenage Pregnancy

Teenage pregnancy is the primary reason females leave school before graduation. According to "Dropouts in America", a research report from the Institute for Educational Leadership, "Four out of five girls who become pregnant in high school drop out as compared to less than 10 percent of those who are childless". It should be noted that South Carolina has a high teenage pregnancy rate.

### Unexcused Absences and Academic Frustration

South Carolina has one of the highest Average Daily Attendance (ADA) rate in the nation. Nevertheless, 4 percent of all children are out of school each day. Some districts report the reason given for dropping out was an excess of unexcused absences brought about by new, stricter attendance policies required under the Education Improvement Act of 1984. Certainly, academic frustration is a cause of dropping out, particularly when students get behind in academic requirements due to the excess of absences. A sense of frustration is a common characteristic of many high school dropouts.

### Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Research shows a high relationship between alcohol and drug abuse and dropping out of school. It is suggested that dropouts use illegal drugs about twice as frequently as high school graduates. One study showed that by age 16, almost 60 percent of the dropouts had used both alcohol and marijuana.

### Under-educated parents

Data shows that over 40 percent of the state's adult population did not graduate from high school. These under-educated adults often fall in the lower socio-economic class, thus compounding the dropout potential of their children due to poverty.

### Learning Disabilities

It has been estimated that the dropout rate among learning disabled students is between 30 and 40 percent.

### Dislike of School

With some dropouts, there is often a long history of school transfers, and the student frequently does not have a feeling of belonging. Many dropouts think of themselves as being "too screwed up to make it" in school.

Although the above list does not exhaust all the factors contributing to the dropout problem, most research agrees that these factors influence those teenagers who are at risk of leaving school early.

### EIA and Target 2000

With the passage of "Target 2000" during the 1989 session, high school dropouts became a primary mission of the state's educational reform initiative. However five years earlier, the EIA started addressing dropout prevention, primarily through increased funding to remedial and compensatory education and by encouraging first grade readiness.

Under the EIA, 86 of the state's districts set up half-day programs for 4-year-olds considered to be "at risk." Under Target 2000, the five remaining school districts will offer the half-day program. Participation of children in the program continues to be voluntary. However, the EIA made kindergarten mandatory in the state, further bolstering first grade readiness.

The EIA also directed significant funding into remedial and compensatory education, thereby assisting those students who have fallen behind, which increases their risk of dropping out.

One of the main planks of the Target 2000 legislation is the Dropout Prevention and Retrieval Program. The new law requires that all school districts implement special programs directed at dropout prevention. These must be in place by the 1994-95 school year. During the interim, selected districts will test various dropout strategies for their effectiveness. School districts will be able to choose among the strategies found effective or other programs that exhibit success potential. The programs will be evaluated on their implementation and assessed for their impact on the dropout program. Those found deficient will have to be corrected by the district board of trustees. Failure to correct a deficient dropout program could jeopardize the district's accreditation and state funds for basic educational programs.

Tying the issuance of driver's licenses to staying in school is a concept the General Assembly explored last session. This is an idea which originated in West Virginia and is being considered by other states as a means of dropout prevention. S.5, pending in the House Education and Public Works Committee, addresses this concept.

Under Target 2000, the Business-Education Partnership Committee in consultation with the EIA's Select Committee will study this concept and report back to the General Assembly by January 1990.

Of long term benefit to dropout prevention is Target 2000's parent education program. Since non-involvement of parents is seen as a factor contributing to high school dropouts, Target 2000 establishes a program to effectively involve parents in teaching their pre-school age child. All school districts must have a parent education program in place by the 1993-94 school year.

These parent education programs will be for parents of children from newborn through age 5 and will include screening of children for developmental difficulties. In addition, the program will provide opportunities for parents without high school diplomas to improve their education. Participation in parent education programs will be voluntary, with priority given to parents of children who are at the greatest risk of school failure.

#### At-Risk Programs

Although Target 2000 reemphasizes the importance of dropout prevention as an aspect of educational reform in South Carolina, a number of the state's school districts are already tackling the

problem. From Charleston to Clemson, many innovative programs are being originated and tested. These programs range from aiding students with their homework to alternate locations and hours for classes.

### Statewide Initiatives

Computer assisted remediation is an area where South Carolina is a national leader. By using Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funds, the state, through the Governor's Remediation Initiative at Winthrop College, provides grants to 100 high schools, where at least 40 percent of the 11th graders are below standard in mathematics. The grants are used for teacher training and suitable computer materials.

The state is also the center of other research. Clemson's National Dropout Prevention Center was established in 1986 to coordinate national strategies to address the problem. A number of pilot projects are being tried, both across the nation and here in South Carolina.

In addition to being a central clearing house for information on dropout data and prevention, the center fosters public-private partnerships among businesses, communities and schools and produces various products useful to practitioners, researchers and policymakers involved in dropout prevention. One tool developed by the center is "Focus," a collection of data bases on prevention. Information in these data bases profile national projects and conferences dealing with all facets of the problem.

### Local Initiatives

In Rock Hill District 3, school officials are developing a comprehensive plan to meet the needs of at-risk children. They are currently using an outside consultant, district personnel, and community agency representatives to identify those factors which make children at-risk.

Project "Retain At-Risk Youth" is a joint project located in Kershaw county. The project incorporates public-private partnerships, awareness raising activities, community-wide advisory groups on at-risk issues, staff development opportunities, at-risk coordinates in each school, and alternative educational opportunities for at-risk youth.

In Anderson School District 2, educators identified two factors which appear to be factors in dropping out of school. These are incompleting homework and inadequate out-of-class preparation time. Using these two criteria, Anderson 2 schools use existing resources to give extra academic aid to these youth. This aid is primarily



tutoring using adult volunteers, teacher cadets, peers and others to conduct these sessions.

In the Lowcountry, programs are also in operation in Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties. In these districts, business-education committees aid schools in a variety of ways. One these, "Adopt an IBM Employee" program, rewards achievement and provides assistance to individual students. Carpentry is taught to some at-risk students by Naval base personnel, and at Baptist College, prospective teachers are encouraged to tutor students.

Columbia's Richland District 1 is the site of the "Cities in School" program. The program is housed in an old SCE&G facility and offers GED preparation, vocational and elective courses, high school completion and tutoring to junior high and high school age youth identified as being at risk.

The Teen Parent program in Greenville is an alternative school which provides education for pregnant teens in Greenville County. In addition to regular academic courses, this initiative offers programs in health education, including labor and delivery, maternal and infant nutrition, child growth and development, family planning. Additionally, family life education includes parenting skills and counseling at school.

In Spartanburg County, Dorman High School focuses on eighth and ninth grade students who have a history of poor attendance, low grades, and poor self concept. These students are channeled into special study halls where guidance of study time and encouragement are provided.

Sumter's Extension Center offers classes for those students not in a traditional school and operates in the evenings. Students assigned to this school complete "contracts", negotiated among the center, the student, and the regular school.

Both Lake City and Greenwood have Alternative Schools, which identify the student's needs and focus on at-risk "dropout prone" students. Students may earn either high school diplomas or GED certificates.

The "Drop-In for Dropouts," sponsored by the Darlington School District and held in the afternoons, is a cooperative of business and education. Students are aided by various agencies, such as adult education, job corps, and TEC and assisted with continuing education information.

Additionally, the School Intervention Plan (ScIP), a prevention program, is sponsored by the S.C. Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. This program, which began as a demonstration project in 1978, is for 7th through 12th grade students who exhibit signs of developing behavioral problems, including inappropriate use of alcohol and other drugs. Programs offered are structured group experience, parent education, and individual or group counseling.

#### National At-Risk Programs

A number of states are addressing the dropout problem with various programs.

In North Carolina, educators are focusing on finding ways "to help the maladjusted student to achieve success in school or in a 'school-like' setting".

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1985 created a grant program to fund efforts aimed at dropout prevention in local schools. Funds from this program are awarded with preference given to school districts with high concentrations of students from low income families and high dropout rates in the last three years.

In the District of Columbia, teachers identify students in the 4th, 5th and 6th grades using dropout probable characteristics. These students are then prioritized for inclusion into special programs aimed at lowering dropout rates.

Wisconsin requires districts with 50 or more dropouts or a high school dropout rate of 5 percent to have an approved intervention plan in place and to submit yearly reports to the state superintendent of education.

Other states are also taking aggressive stands to curb dropout prevention. Arizona requires that the Board of Education establish four year projects for at-risk students. The targeted grades are K-3 and grades 7-12.

In Rhode Island, three Governor's schools have been established to serve at-risk youth. Legislation also mandates tracking systems for attendance, academic programs, alternative programs, and the personal history of at-risk students.

Maryland's new program will be directed and administered by Private Industry Councils while local schools will identify and recruit at-risk students and provide technical assistance.

In Kentucky, the General Assembly recently passed a law requiring mandatory completion of an education program for those convicted of a misdemeanor who have not graduated from high school.

### Conclusion

Realizing the complexity of the dropout problem, most education researchers point out that remedies must be multi-faceted. An extensive list of preventive measures are presented in Making America Work: Productive People, Productive Policies, a study published by the National Governors Association. Many of these measures are common to research on this issue and appear in most lists of prevention strategies.

Pre-school education and screening for potential impediments to learning, such as learning disabilities and parental non-involvement, are just two examples of the proposals being advanced. Easy-to-enter second chance programs, continued contact by schools with those students who do leave school before graduation, and flexible curricula and schedules are positive measures that can provide incentives for at-risk students to remain in school and for dropouts to return.

Collaborative business-community education ventures are crucial for successful long term endeavors. The collection and updating of data on dropouts will enhance the application of successful programs and the design of future projects. Additionally, alternate degrees that include vocational training, stress basic skills and real life coping skills will benefit students going straight into the labor force after high school graduation. Above all, it is agreed that early identification and intervention are two of the most the critical factors.